

# Language Typology and the Comparison of Languages

*Masayoshi Shibatani*

Kobe University

While comparison of languages presupposes a common framework neutral to the structures of the languages compared and contrasted, the contemporary grammatical terms and concepts have been developed primarily on the basis of Accusative-type European languages. This has created a great deal of confusion in the universals research. Typological studies in recent years have in part been concerned with the correction of this unfortunate situation.

This presentation looks at the syntactic organizations of three distinct types of languages (the Accusative type, the Ergative type, and the Philippine-type) and examines the nature of grammatical relations, Subject in particular, the voice patterns, and the ways in which semantic interpretation interacts with the typological differences in the organization of the argument structure.

